



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Smarter Balanced Launches Spanish Webpage to Reach Broader Audience

Translated materials now available for teachers, parents, and students

OLYMPIA, Wash. – The [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](http://www.smarterbalanced.org) (Smarter Balanced) launched a Spanish webpage today with downloadable factsheets for teachers, parents, and students. The webpage provides information on the assessment system and the Consortium's work to meet the needs of all students, including English language learners (ELLs).

"Making Spanish-language materials available is part of our commitment to keeping stakeholders informed about our progress," said Joe Willhoft, Ph.D., executive director of Smarter Balanced. "With a growing number of English language learners across the United States, it is important that teachers, parents, and students have access to resources to help prepare for next-generation assessments."

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will provide valid, fair, and reliable measures of student achievement and growth toward college and career readiness for ELLs. In collaboration with member states, educators, and experts, the Consortium is developing an Accessibility and Accommodations Framework. Grounded in current research and a deep understanding of the current diversity of accessibility policies and practices across state and national assessment systems, the Framework provides the conceptual underpinning for accessibility approaches, accessibility tools and accommodation options, and implementation guidance for the assessment system.

"Smarter Balanced assessments are designed with the needs of English language learners in mind," said Magda Chia, Ph.D., director of support for under-represented students. "Through accommodations like pop-up glossaries for the mathematics assessment and a research-based approach to developing assessment items that reduces linguistic burdens, the Consortium is working to ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills."

In 2012, Smarter Balanced convened an advisory committee comprised of national experts in ELL assessment, bilingual education, and language acquisition. This committee provides feedback to Smarter Balanced staff, work groups, and contractors to ensure that the assessments provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of achievement and growth for English learners. More information about the ELL advisory committee is available at: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/about/advisory-committees/#ELLAC>.

In addition to the advisory committee, a state-led Accessibility and Accommodations Work Group focuses on ensuring the assessments are designed to meet the needs of special student populations. As part of the development of accessibility and accommodations policies, Smarter Balanced commissioned a literature review of existing research on assessing ELLs and a translation framework for testing ELLs in mathematics. These documents are available on a webpage devoted to under-represented students: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/support-for-under-represented-students/>.



The webpage for Spanish speakers can be accessed from the Smarter Balanced website at:
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/como-ayudar-a-todos-los-estudiantes-a-que-tengan-exito/>.

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About Smarter Balanced

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium brings together states to create a common, innovative assessment system for mathematics and English language arts/literacy that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and helps prepare students for college and careers. The Consortium involves educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups in a transparent and consensus-driven process to help all students thrive in a knowledge-driven global economy. The Consortium's projects are funded through a four-year, \$175 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, comprising 99 percent of activity resources, with the remaining support provided through generous contributions of charitable foundations. Membership is open to any interested U.S. state. For more information, please visit www.smarterbalanced.org.